

Third Ward To Main Street Connectivity Project

Elgin Street Public Meeting No. 1 Minutes

The Third Ward Redevelopment Council (TWRC) and the City of Houston's Planning and Development Department held the last of three public meetings in the Third Ward the week of August 26th, 2002. The purpose of the meetings was to solicit public input on the design of street improvements, landscaping and other amenities to Blodgett, Elgin and OST/Almeda Streets from Scott Street to Main Street. Residents, business owners and other stakeholders along Elgin Street met with representatives of the TWRC, OST/Almeda TIRZ, the City of Houston's Planning and Development Department and the consultant team, led by M2L Associates, Inc. on Thursday, August 29th at Emancipation Park Recreation Center to identify issues and opportunities in the corridor. This input will be used to generate ideas for improving the image and function of Elgin Street. These design concepts will be presented to the stakeholders in late September for review and comments.

AGENDA ITEMS

- I. Consultants presented background of the project and scope of work.
- II. Participants divided into four facilitated, breakout sessions.
- III. Each group was asked to look at three factors within their neighborhoods: 1) the strengths of the corridor; 2) corridor weaknesses; and 3) the potential opportunities and future vision of the corridor.
- IV. Participants presented findings and consultant team presented concluding remarks.

The following information represents the outcome of the discussion group session sorted by aesthetics/perception, safety, infrastructure, transportation, and potential improvements*:

*(Note: number in parentheses indicates the number of times this item was generated)

AESTHETICS/PERCEPTION (*Visible improvements and overall impression of corridor*)

Strengths

- Good community participants (Riverside Hospital, Shore, Emancipation Park, University of Houston, Jones School, FUUSA, etc)
- Historic sites
- Strong community churches (Progressive Baptist, Newburg, St. Johns, Jordan Grove, etc.)
- Strong/numerous institutions
- Third Ward multi-service center

Weaknesses

- Vacant land and poorly kept properties
- Unattractive Highway 59 appearance

SAFETY (*Unsafe conditions relating to pedestrian and automobile uses and functions*)

Strengths

Weaknesses

- Poor street light coverage and maintenance
- High traffic volumes at school are not organized and are unsafe

INFRASTRUCTURE (*Roadway widths, utilities, traffic signals, etc.*)

Strengths

- Good pedestrian access

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- Good street drainage
- Wide esplanades
- Good pedestrian scale

Weaknesses

- Narrow sidewalks in poor condition
- Litter along ditches

TRANSPORTATION *(Automobile circulation, mass transit.)*

Strengths

Weaknesses

- Inadequate bus service and inconvenient routes

POTENTIAL STREET IMPROVEMENTS *(Design ideas for improving the corridor)*

- Potential development opportunities
- Coordinate efforts for community
- A strong historic theme
- Way finding and historic land markers
- Landscaped esplanades
- Preservation of neighborhoods
- Stronger pedestrian activities
- Consistent streetscape design
- Highway 59 bridge overpass design